



# **Abstracts of Recent Research on Recidivism**

**August 2005**

**RECIDIVISM ABSTRACTS**

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# GENERAL

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Title: **Sentences for Adult Felons in Washington: Options to Address Prison Overcrowding Part II (Recidivism Analyses)**

Publisher: Washington State Institute for Public Policy

Year: 2004

Author(s): Barnoski R

Abstract: *The study of Washington state offenders used statistical methods to estimate the impact of prison sentences and length of time in prison on recidivism for offenders at risk in the community between 1986 and 2000. The findings are:*

- *Being sentenced to prison does not reduce recidivism of offenders and may increase it by 5 to 10 percentage points.*
- *However, once sentenced to prison, spending more time in prison slightly reduces recidivism for most offenders (by 1 to 3 percentage points for each additional six months in prison).*
- *Only a small percentage of offenders now sentenced to prison are low risk.*
- *For those in prison, infraction history is a predictor for future re-offending.*
- *Current Washington sentencing policies send higher-risk offenders to prison and keep higher-risk offenders in prison longer.*

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Title: **Gender Differences in Life-Course Theory of Recidivism: A Survival Analysis**

Publication: International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology

Issue: Vol. 49, No. 3

Pages: 325-342

Year: 2005

Author(s): Benda, BB

Abstract: *This study of 300 women and 300 men graduates of a boot camp finds that there are noteworthy gender differences in predictors of tenure in the community without criminal recidivism in a 5-year follow-up. The Cox proportional hazards models show that urban residence, childhood and recent abuses, living with a criminal partner, selling drugs, stress, depression, fearfulness, and suicidal thoughts are stronger positive predictors of recidivism for women than for men. Men are more likely to return to prison because of criminal peer associations, carrying weapons, alcohol abuse, and aggressive feelings. Job satisfaction and education lengthen time in the community more for men than women, whereas the number of children and relationships are more important to tenure in the community for women. The implications for the findings for theory are discussed.*

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Title: **Factors Associated With Recidivism in a Criminal Population**

Publication: Journal of Nervous Mental Disorders

Issue: Vol. 180

Pages: 543-550

Year: 1992

Author(s): DeJong J, Virkkunen M, Linnoila M

**Abstract:** *This study is a follow-up of a sample of 348 men convicted of manslaughter, attempted manslaughter, or arson who were released from incarceration. Multiple factors assessed at the time of incarceration, including demographic, behavioral, family history, and biochemical variables, and psychiatric diagnoses were used in an attempt to discriminate between those who became recidivists during the follow-up period and those who did not. Violent recidivism was most strongly associated (sensitivity of 90%) with impulsivity of the original crime in killers and attempted killers; for arsonists, having made a suicide attempt was the strongest predictor (68% sensitivity). For predictive purposes, both single factor associations and multiple entries into discriminant analysis produced too many false-positives, i.e., the high rate of false designation as recidivist remained a problem.*

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**Title:** **Competing Risks, Persistence, and Desistance in Analyzing Recidivism**  
**Publication:** Journal of Quantitative Criminology  
**Issue:** Vol. 16, No. 4  
**Pages:** 385 - 414  
**Year:** 2000  
**Author(s):** Escarela G, Francis B, Soothill K

**Abstract:** *A statistical procedure was developed to analyze recidivism in samples which were subject to the presence of desisters and to multiple modes of reconviction. This allowed for a more accurate study of individuals' transition and hazard in the type and timing of offenses following a specific type of conviction. The use of a nonparametric approach for investigating failure in the presence of other acting causes was shown; initial estimators of the probabilities of reconviction for different types of offenses were obtained, and the method was used to display the data as well as to choose an appropriate parametric family for the survival times. An exponential mixture model for competing risks was presented in such a way that it allowed researchers to adjust for concomitant variables and to assess their effects on the probabilities both of reconviction for predetermined types of offenses and desistance and of the hazards of reconviction; a method for assessing calibration of predicted survival probabilities was suggested. A 21-year follow-up of persons convicted of indecent assault on a female in 1973 illustrates the methods; researchers found a high probability of sexual reconviction for individuals with previous sexual convictions and evidence of diversity and a raised hazard of reconviction for young chronic offenders.*

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**Title:** **The Effects of Prison Sentences on Recidivism**  
**Publisher:** Department of Solicitor General Canada  
**Year:** 1999  
**Author(s):** Gendreau P, Goggin C, Cullen FT

**Abstract:** *50 studies dating from 1958 involving 336,052 offenders produced 325 correlations between recidivism and (a) length of time in prison and recidivism or (b) serving a prison sentence vs. receiving a community-based sanction. The data was analyzed using quantitative methods (i.e., meta-analysis) to determine whether prison reduced criminal behavior or recidivism. The results were as follows: under both of the above conditions, prison produced slight increases in recidivism. Secondly, there was some tendency for lower risk offenders to be more negatively affected by the prison experience.*

*The essential conclusions reached from this study were: Prisons should not be used with the expectation of reducing criminal behavior. On the basis of the present results, excessive use of incarceration has enormous cost implications. In order to determine who is being adversely affected by prison, it is incumbent upon prison officials to implement repeated, comprehensive assessments of offenders' attitudes, values, and behaviors while incarcerated. The primary*

*justification of prison should be to incapacitate offenders (particularly, those of a chronic, higher risk nature) for reasonable periods and to exact retribution.*

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Title: **Religious Programs, Institutional Adjustment, and Recidivism among Former Inmates in Prison Fellowship Programs**

Publication: Justice Quarterly

Issue: Vol. 14, No. 1

Year: 1997

Author(s): Johnson BR, Larson DB, Pitts TC

Abstract: *This study examined the impact of religious programs on institutional adjustment and recidivism rates in two matched groups of inmates from four adult male prisons in New York State. One group had participated in programs sponsored by Prison Fellowship (PF); the other had no involvement with PF. PF and non-PF inmates are similar on measures of institutional adjustment, as measured by both general and serious prison infractions, and recidivism, as measured by arrests during a one-year follow-up period. However, after controlling for level of involvement in PF-sponsored programs, inmates who were most active in Bible studies were significantly less likely to be rearrested during the follow-up period.*

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Title: **Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994**

Publisher: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs – Bureau of Justice Statistics

Year: 2002

Author(s): Langan PA, Levin DJ

Abstract: *This study of the rearrest, reconviction, and reincarceration of prisoners tracked 272,111 former inmates for 3 years after their release in 1994. The 272,111 – representing two-thirds of all prisoners released in the United States that year – were discharged from prisons in 15 States.*

*Released prisoners with the highest re-arrest rates were robbers (70.2%), burglars (74.0%), larcenists (74.6%), motor vehicle thieves (78.8%), those in prison for possessing or selling stolen property (77.4%), and those in prison for possessing, using, or selling illegal weapons (70.2%). Released prisoners with the lowest re-arrest rates were those in prison for homicide (40.7%), rape 46.0%), other sexual assault (41.4%), and driving under the influence (51.5%). Of all violent crimes (homicide, kidnapping, rape, other sexual assault, assault, and robbery) robbers had highest rate of arrest and reconviction.*

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Title: **Can Electronic Monitoring Reduce Crime for Moderate to High-Risk Offenders?**

Publication: Journal of Experimental Criminology

Issue: Vol. 1, No. 2

Pages: 215 – 237

Year: 2005

Author(s): Renzema M, Mayo-Wilson E

Abstract: *Electronic monitoring (EM) of offenders has been in use for just over two decades and motives for using it remain diverse. Some agencies that use EM attempt to deliver humane and affordable sanctions while others seek to relieve jail crowding or to avoid the construction of new jails. Nonetheless, all EM programs aim to suppress the criminal behavior of offenders being monitored and its advocates have always hoped EM could be instrumental in reducing long-term recidivism. This review investigates the history of EM and the extent to which EM empirically affects criminal behavior in moderate to high-risk populations. All available recidivism studies that*

included at least one comparison group between the first impact study in 1986 and 2002 were considered for the review. Although variants such as GPS tracking and continuous testing for alcohol in perspiration have recently emerged, no studies of these technologies were found that met the review's inclusion criteria. Studies are examined and combined for meta-analysis where appropriate. Given its continued and widespread use and the dearth of reliable information about its effects, the authors conclude that applications of EM as a tool for reducing crime are not supported by existing data. Properly controlled experiments would be required to draw stronger conclusions about the effects of EM.

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Title: **Violent Recidivism: Assessing Predictive Validity**  
Publication: Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology  
Issue: Vol. 63, No. 5  
Pages: 737 – 748  
Year: 1995  
Author(s): Rice ME, Harris GT

Abstract: *Until very recently, there has been little evidence of the ability of either clinicians or actuarial instruments to predict violent behavior. Moreover, a confusing variety of measures have been proposed for the evaluation of the accuracy of predictions. This report demonstrates that receiver operating characteristics (ROCs) have advantages over other measures inasmuch as they are simultaneously independent of the base rate for violence in the populations studied and of the particular cutoff score chosen to classify cases as likely to be violent. In an illustration of the value of this approach, the base rates of violence were altered with the use of data from 3.5-, 6-, and 10-year follow-ups of 799 previously violent men. Base rates for the 10-year follow-up were also altered by changing the definition of violent recidivism and by examining a high-risk subgroup. The report also shows how ROC methods can be used to compare the performance of different instruments for the prediction of violence. The report illustrates how ROCs facilitate decisions about whether, at a particular base rate, the use of a prediction instrument is warranted. Finally, some of the limitations of ROCs are outlined, and some cautionary remarks are made with regard to their use.*

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Title: **Work as a Turning Point in the Life Course of Criminals: A Duration Model of Age, Employment, and Recidivism**  
Publication: American Sociological Review  
Issue: Vol. 65  
Pages: 529 – 546  
Year: 2000  
Author(s): Uggen C

Abstract: *Sociologists have increasingly emphasized “turning points” in explaining behavioral change over the life course. Is work a turning point in the life course of criminal offenders? If criminals are provided with jobs, are they likely to stop committing crimes? Prior research is inconclusive because work effects have been biased by selectivity and obscured by the interaction of age and employment. This study yields more refined estimates by specifying event history models to analyze assignment to, eligibility for, and current participation in a national work experiment for criminal offenders. Age is found to interact with employment to affect the rate of self-reported recidivism: Those aged 27 or older are less likely to report crime and arrest when provided with marginal employment opportunities than when such opportunities are not provided. Among young participants, those in their teens and early twenties, the experimental job treatment had little effect on crime. Work thus appears to be a turning point for older, but not younger, offenders.*

# DRUG OFFENDERS

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Title: **Peer, Family, And Motivational Influences on Drug Treatment Process and Recidivism for Probationers**  
Publication: Journal of Clinical Psychology  
Issue: Vol. 53  
Pages: 387-397  
Year: 1997  
Author(s): Broome KM, Knight DK, Knight K, Hiller ML, Simpson DD

Abstract: *Treatment efforts appear to be effective in reducing crime among drug using individuals, but components of the treatment process associated with client improvement need to be identified. Furthermore, these elements of treatment may play an intermediate role in the connection between client background characteristics and later criminal activity. The current study examines a structural equation model including client perceptions of their drug related problems, peer deviance, and family dysfunction as influences upon the formation of therapeutic relationships during treatment and re-arrests following treatment. Results showed therapeutic relationships were positively associated with recognition of drug related problems and negatively related to re-arrest. Peer deviance also was positively related to re-arrest.*

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Title: **Recidivism among Drug Offenders Following Exposure to Treatment**  
Publication: Criminal Justice Policy Review  
Issue: Vol. 16, No. 2  
Pages: 237-259  
Year: 2005  
Author(s): Hepburn JR

Abstract: *The contemporary debate about punishment versus treatment for drug-using criminal offenders often revolves around the pragmatic issue of the extent to which treatment is more effective than punishment at reducing the probability of subsequent criminal behavior. Although there is growing evidence that treatment works, it is equally apparent that the effects of exposure to treatment vary by offender characteristics, offense characteristics, and the degree of program involvement. Using data on 3,328 drug-using offenders eligible for diversion from prosecution to a community treatment program, multivariate survival models indicate significant differences in the time of re-arrest during a 5-year follow-up period, suggesting that the act of entering treatment is a signal of the offender's readiness for treatment and that the time to re-arrest is affected by exposure to treatment. The findings are discussed in terms of current efforts to use the threat of legal sanction to motivate criminal offenders into drug treatment.*

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Title: **Prison-Based Substance Abuse Treatment, Residential Aftercare and Recidivism**  
Publication: Addiction  
Issue: Vol. 94, No. 6  
Pages: 833  
Year: 1999  
Author(s): Hiller ML, Knight K, Simpson DD



**Abstract:** *This study examined the impact of residential aftercare on recidivism following prison-based treatment for drug-involved offenders. It used a matched group quasi-experimental design. Survival regression analyses were used to predict time until re-arrest. A logistic regression model was constructed for predicting aftercare completion. The study examined a 9-month in-prison therapeutic community (ITC) and several community-based transitional therapeutic communities (TTCs). Data were collected from 396 male inmates (293 treated, 103 untreated). Background information (gender, ethnicity, age, education level, criminal history and risk for recidivism) was abstracted from the state criminal justice databases and a structured interview led by clinical staff. During treatment process measures were based on inmate self-ratings of their counselors, program and peers. A post-treatment interview conducted by field research staff assessed satisfaction with transitional aftercare. Post-release recidivism was based on state-maintained computerized criminal history records. The study found that ITC treatment, especially when followed by residential aftercare, was effective for reducing post-release recidivism rates. Lower satisfaction with transitional aftercare treatment was associated with not completing the residential phase of community-based aftercare. The study concluded that corrections-based treatment policy should emphasize a continuum of care model (from institution to community) with high quality programs and services.*

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**Title:** **Predicting the Effect of Substance Abuse Treatment on Probationer Recidivism**  
**Publication:** Journal of Experimental Criminology  
**Issue:** Vol. 1, No. 2  
**Pages:** 159 – 189  
**Year:** 2005  
**Author(s):** Lattimore PK, Krebs CP, Koetse W, Lindquist C, Cowell AJ

**Abstract:** *Support for the effectiveness of substance abuse treatment to reduce substance use and recidivism among populations supervised by the criminal justice system continues to grow in substance abuse and criminal justice literature. Recent studies show that a variety of programs including the Breaking the Cycle program and drug courts appear to result in improved outcomes for offenders. In this paper, we examine the effect of non-residential substance abuse treatment on arrest. Our data are for almost 134,000 'drug-involved' individuals sentenced to probation in Florida between July 1995 and June 2000. Nearly 52,000 of these individuals received non-residential substance abuse treatment, while 81,797 did not. Our approach is a methodologically simple one that entails stratifying our data by treatment status, estimating logit and negative binomial models of arrest for each of the two datasets, and then applying each model to both datasets. This approach, which requires that both groups include subjects for whom treatment is appropriate, is analogous to using regression models to predict outcomes for new values of independent variables. For each observation in the dataset, we use the models to predict the expected outcomes for each individual under two scenarios – receiving non-residential treatment and receiving no treatment. Summing over these individual estimates provides an estimate of the total numbers of arrests that would be expected under different levels of population exposure to treatment. Results suggest that non-residential treatment reduced both the expected numbers of individuals who recidivated (i.e., were arrested) and the expected total numbers of arrests in the 12 and 24 months following placement on supervision.*

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**Title:** **Confronting Relapse and Recidivism: Case Management and Aftercare Services in the OPTS Programs**  
**Publisher:** The Urban Institute  
**Year:** 1999  
**Author(s):** Rossman S, Gouvis C, Buck J, Morley E.



**Abstract:** *The Opportunity to Succeed (OPTS) program was designed to reduce substance abuse relapse and criminal recidivism by providing comprehensive aftercare services to felony offenders who have alcohol and drug offense histories. Enrollment in OPTS was anticipated to improve access to, and utilization of, needed community-based services by eligible probationers/parolees. In addition to supporting sobriety and reducing criminal activity, OPTS services were expected to promote pro-social attitudes and behaviors among participants, resulting in such desirable outcomes as gainful employment and responsible family/domestic arrangements.*

*The research used an experimental model that randomly assigned eligible felons to either the OPTS program (treatment group) or routine supervision (control group). Program implementation was documented by searchers using a number of techniques, including field visits to directly observe program activities; one-on-one interviews and small group discussions with staff, and separately with clients; and secondary analysis of program materials (e.g., memoranda of agreement, brochures, newsletters). This report describes the major components of the OPTS model, including aspects of case management and supervision, as well as core services offered to OPTS clients in each of the five core domains in the three selected sites.*

*This report also assesses selected service utilization attributes and outcomes, including such considerations as: 1) the use of specific categories of services (e.g., housing, family skills training, education or training programs); 2) the variety and comprehensiveness of services supporting individuals; 3) the service intensity, i.e., the number of contacts and duration of utilization by service type; and 4) recipients' reported level of satisfaction with the services they received.*

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**Title:** **Reducing Recidivism through a Seamless System of Care: Components of Effective Treatment, Supervision, and Transition Services in the Community**

**Publisher:** Office of National Drug Control Policy

**Year:** 1998

**Author(s):** Taxman FS

**Abstract:** *This paper presents a systemic case management model of substance abuse treatment, testing, and sanctions for offenders implemented as part of the Washington/Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (W/B HIDTA) project sponsored by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). The focus of this effort is to reduce recidivism and drug consumption among hard-core users of drugs, or offenders. This paper has four purposes: 1) to provide an overview of treatment as a crime control measure; 2) to present the typical barriers to offenders receiving treatment; 3) to identify core components of the W/B HIDTA seamless system of care, particularly for transition services; and 4) to identify the core principles of successful treatment and transition interventions.*

## **FEMALE OFFENDERS**

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**Title:** **Risk of Repeat Offending Among Violent Female Offenders with Psychotic and Personality Disorders**

**Publication:** American Journal of Psychiatry

**Issue:** Vol. 160

**Pages:** 947 – 951

**Year:** 2003

**Author(s):** Putkonen H, Komulainen EJ, Virkkunen M, Eronen M, Lönnqvist J

**Abstract:** *The aim of this study was to examine the rate of criminal recidivism among female homicide offenders evaluated by forensic psychiatrists, to compare this rate with that of other violent female offenders, and to analyze the explanatory variables of recidivism. This was a retrospective study of all women (N=132) sent for forensic psychiatric examination after being convicted of homicide or attempted homicide in Finland during 1982–1992; subjects were followed up until mid-1999. Data were collected from the national crime register, the prisoner record, and Statistics Finland. The authors compared the rate of violent repeat offending in this group with that of other violent women and analyzed the explanatory variables of recidivism. During the follow-up period, 23% of the study group committed a repeat offense, 15% of which were violent and 3% of which were homicides. Almost half of all repeat offenses occurred within the first 2 years after the index offense. There was no statistically significant difference in violent recidivism between the study group and other violent female offenders. Of those who committed repeat offenses, 81% were diagnosed with a personality disorder, and 10% were diagnosed with psychosis. Criminality prior to the index event, alcohol or drug dependency, and young age significantly raised the risk and rapidity of further offenses. The risk of recidivism was high in this study group yet was similar to that of other violent female offenders. The risk was high very early after release. It seems that women and men who are violent and have personality disorders are comparable in their risk of recidivism.*

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**Title:** **Psychopathy and Recidivism among Female Inmates**

**Publication:** Law and Human Behavior

**Issue:** Vol. 22, No. 1

**Pages:** 109 – 128

**Year:** 1998

**Author(s):** Salekin RT, Rogers R, Ustad KL, Sewell KW

**Abstract:** *Despite a plethora of studies investigating psychopathy among male offenders, little is known about the applicability of this construct to female populations. Research has shown that prevalence rate, symptom presentation, and diagnostic comorbidity differ for females as compared to males. The current study is the first to examine the relationship between psychopathy and recidivism among women. Recidivism data on a sample of 78 female inmates were examined at a 1-year interval in relation to the Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R), inclusion criteria for the Antisocial Personality Disorder Diagnosis from the Personality Disorder Examination (PDE), and selected scales from the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI; Antisocial and Aggression scales). The egocentricity subscale of the PAI, Factor 1 of the PCL-R, and the verbal aggression subscale of the PAI were the best predictors of future recidivism. Specific differences emerged between male and female offenders when comparing the present data with previous studies of male psychopaths.*

## JUVENILE OFFENDERS

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**Title:** **Can Mentoring or Skill Training Reduce Recidivism? Observational Study with Propensity Analysis**

**Publisher:** Department of Psychology, University of Colorado at Boulder

**Author(s):** Blechman EA, Maurice A, Buecker B, Helberg C

**Abstract:** *This study compared juvenile offenders' recidivism following nonrandom assignment to juvenile diversion (JD, n = 137), JD plus skill training (ST, n = 55), or JD plus mentoring (MEN, n = 45). Intake characteristics that distinguished intervention groups were used to calculate assignment*

*propensity scores. After propensity score blocking balanced intake characteristics, ST proved more cost effective than MEN, achieving a 14% relative reduction in recidivism at a savings of \$33,600 per hundred youths. In ST, 37% were rearrested 2 years or more after intake, compared to 51% in MEN and 46% in JD. In two of five propensity subclasses, time to first re-arrest was longer in ST (M = 767 days) than in MEN (M = 638 days) or JD (M = 619 days). These results argue for an experimental comparison of ST and MEN and for observational studies with propensity analysis when randomization to juvenile justice interventions is infeasible.*

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Title: **Psychopathy and Recidivism in Adolescent Sex Offenders**  
Publication: Criminal Justice and Behavior  
Issue: Vol. 28, No. 4  
Pages: 427-449  
Year: 2001  
Author(s): Grettton HM, McBride M, Hare RD, O'Shaughnessy R, Kumka G

Abstract: *Psychopathy, as measured by the Hare Psychopathy Checklist-Revised (PCL-R), has emerged as one of the most important factors in understanding and predicting adult criminal behavior, including sex offending. The authors used extensive file information to score a youth version of the PCL-R (the PCL:YV) for 220 adolescent males in an outpatient sex offender treatment program. The authors coded charges and convictions for an average of 55 months following cessation of treatment. The PCL:YV was positively and significantly related to total, violent, and non-violent reoffense rates. Offenders with a high PCL:YV score and penile plethysmographic evidence of deviant sexual arousal prior to treatment were at very high risk for general re-offending. The results suggest that psychopathy may have much the same implications for the criminal justice system in adolescent offenders as it does in adult offenders.*

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Title: **Desistance from Crime: Is it Different for Women and Girls?**  
Publication: After Crime and Punishment: Pathways to Offender Reintegration  
Editors: Maruna S, Immarigeon R  
Pages: 181-200  
Year: 2004  
Author(s): McIvor G, Jamieson J, Murray C

Abstract: *The study involved in-depth interviews with 376 juveniles (138 males and 138 females) in 3 age groups: 14- to 15-years-old, 18- to 19-years-old, and 22- to 25-years-old. The samples were drawn from two Scottish towns that had crime rates close to the national average. Topics addressed in the interviews were education; employment; use of leisure and lifestyle; drug and alcohol use; offending; relationships with family, friends, and partners; neighborhood, community, and society; values and beliefs; victimization; identity; and aspirations for the future. Prior to being interviewed, the juveniles completed a self-report questionnaire about their offending behavior. Based on responses, the juveniles were placed in one of three categories based on the recency and seriousness of their self-reported offending. The categories were "resisters" (n=92), if they had never offended; "desisters" (n=75), if they had offended in the past but not in the previous 12 months; and as "persisters" (n=109), if they had committed at least 1 serious offense or several less serious offenses in the previous 12 months. A remarkable degree of consistency was observed in the experiences, views, and attitudes of the youth within each of the categories. "Desisters" were more likely than "resisters" (but less likely than "persisters") to consider that some types of offending were acceptable, to use alcohol and drugs, to "hang out" in public places, to have been involved with the police, and to express negative attitudes toward the police. They were closer to "persisters" in being more likely than "resisters" to have friends and a family member who had offended. Apparently the process of desistance may differ in some respects between male and female youth.*

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Title: **Factors Associated With Recidivism in Juveniles: An Analysis of Serious Juvenile Sex Offenders**

Publication: Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency

Issue: Vol. 39, No. 4

Pages: 421-436

Year: 2002

Author(s): Miner MH

Abstract: *This study used four Cox regression analyses to examine the predictors of re-offending in a sample of 86 male adolescents adjudicated delinquent for the commission of sexual offenses and treated in a corrections-based sex offender treatment program. The results indicate that the predictors of re-offense, when defined as an arrest, conviction, or parole violation for any new crime, differ somewhat from those found for adults. Specifically, increased risk for re-offense was associated with impulsivity, involvement with significantly younger children, younger age at first offense, and shorter treatment stays. Decreased risk for re-offense was associated with having a male victim, having been a sexual abuse victim, and multiple paraphilias. These factors were not all stable across analyses. These data indicate that the risk prediction methods used for adult sex offenders would not be appropriate for adolescent populations and that more research is needed before attempts are made to develop such tools for adolescents.*

## MENTALLY ILL OFFENDERS

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Title: **Forecasting Recidivism in Mentally Ill Offenders Released from Prison**

Publication: Law and Human Behavior

Issue: Vol. 28, No. 2

Pages: 133 - 155

Year: 2004

Author(s): Gagliardi GJ, Lovell D, Peterson PD, Jemelka R

Abstract: *Little research has focused on assessing the risk of mentally ill offenders (MIOs) released from state prisons. Here we report findings for 333 mentally ill offenders released from Washington State prisons. Logistic regression identified sets of variables that forecasted felony and violent reconviction as accurately as state-of-the-art risk assessment instruments. Sums of simple recoded versions of these variables predicted re-offense as well as complex logistic regression equations. Five of these 9 variables were found to be relative protective factors. Findings are discussed in terms of the value of stock correctional variables in forecasting risk, the need to base actuarial risk assessments on local data, the importance of protective factors in assessing MIO risk, and the need for dynamic, situational, and clinical variables that can further sharpen predictive accuracy of emergent risk in the community.*

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Title: **Recidivism and Use of Services among Persons with Mental Illness after Release from Prison**

Publication: Psychiatric Services

Issue: Vol. 53

Pages: 1290-1296

Year: 2002  
Author(s): Lovell D, Gagliardi GJ, Peterson PD

**Abstract:** *Despite large numbers of mentally ill offenders in prisons, few studies of mentally ill offenders released from prison have been conducted. This study describes such a population of mentally ill offenders, the post-release services they received, new offenses they committed, and factors associated with recidivism. METHODS: The authors reviewed electronic files and archived medical charts from the state corrections department to identify mentally ill offenders who left Washington state prisons in 1996 and 1997. Data on the individuals identified were then provided by several public agencies. Summary statistics were computed on subjects' characteristics and post-release outcomes, and logistic regression analysis was used to identify variables that predicted convictions of new felonies and new crimes against persons. RESULTS: A total of 337 mental ill offenders were identified. Men and women differed with regard to offenses, diagnoses, rates of drug abuse, and use of mental health resources. Although most subjects (73 percent) received post-release social or mental health services, few received clinically meaningful levels of service during the first year after release. Charges for new crimes or supervision violations were common (70 percent of subjects), but only 10 percent committed new felonies against persons, and 2 percent committed very serious crimes. Youth, frequency of past felonies, and variables such as misbehavior in prison were associated with new offenses. CONCLUSIONS: Whether community mental health treatment affects recidivism cannot be assessed fairly in the absence of higher levels of service during the first months after release. This study also identifies actuarial risk factors that predict new offenses at a level comparable to that of published risk assessment instruments. Commission of less serious offenses that usually precede felonies may provide an early warning of risk for new felonies and an opportunity for strategic intervention. The low rate of serious violence in the community by mentally ill offenders released from prison suggests that the risk of violence may be a weak and potentially counterproductive rationale for community support and mental health treatment of mentally ill offenders.*

## SEX OFFENDERS

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**Title:** **Recidivism Base Rates, Predictions of Sex Offender Recidivism, and the "Sexual Predator" Commitment Laws**  
**Publication:** Behavioral Sciences & the Law  
**Issue:** Vol. 16  
**Pages:** 97-114  
**Year:** 1999  
**Author(s):** Doren DM

**Abstract:** *Predictions of future sexual offending have been mandated by various "Sexual Predator" commitment laws, despite historical arguments that clinicians are frequently inaccurate and over-predict violence. The basis for those arguments has been the perspective that sexual recidivism is a relatively rare event. Research is reviewed, however, with the finding that sexual recidivism for certain offenders is a rather common occurrence when the definition of recidivism is in keeping with the sex offender commitment laws. This finding is used to demonstrate that under-, rather than over-prediction of the designated violence is necessarily today's practice. Practical and ethical implications are discussed.*

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**Title:** **Prediction of Recidivism in Extra- Familial Child Molesters Based on Court-Related Assessments**



Publication: Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment  
Issue: Vol. 12, No. 3  
Pages: 203 - 221  
Year: 2000  
Author(s): Firestone P, Bradford JM, McCoy M, Greenberg DM, Curry S, Larose MR

**Abstract:** *One hundred ninety-two convicted extra-familial child molesters were followed for an average of 7.8 years after their conviction. The percentage of men who had committed a sexual, a violent or any criminal offense by the 12th year was 15.1, 20.3, and 41.6, respectively. The sexual recidivists, compared with the non-recidivists, demonstrated more problems with alcohol and showed greater sexual arousal to assaultive stimuli involving children than to mutually consenting stimuli with children. The violent recidivists, compared with the non-recidivists, were more likely to have a history of violence in the families in which they were raised and were rated significantly more psychopathic on the Psychopathy Checklist—Revised (PCL-R). They also showed more sexual arousal to stimuli depicting mutually consenting sexual interactions with children than to adult stimuli. In terms of any criminal recidivism, recidivists were younger, had completed fewer years of school, and were raised in psychologically more harmful family environments compared with non-recidivists. They also reported that, before 16 years of age, they were more likely to have been physically abused and were more likely to have been removed from their homes compared to those that did not recidivate. In addition, recidivists demonstrated more general hostility on the Buss–Durkee Hostility Inventory and were rated significantly more psychopathic on the PCL-R. The phallometric assessments revealed, that the criminal recidivists, compared to the non-recidivists, showed more sexual arousal to stimuli depicting coercive sexual activity with children than consenting sexual activities with children. In addition, they showed more sexual arousal to scenes depicting adult rape than adult mutually consenting sex. Finally, the recidivists also had more charges or convictions for violence and any criminal acts. The small number of significant differences between recidivists and non-recidivists in the sexual and violent categories precluded an attempt to determine which combination of factors meaningfully predicted re-offending. However, for criminal recidivism, a stepwise discriminant function analysis to assess the combination of factors that most successfully distinguished between groups in terms of criminal recidivism was significant, with subjects' age, total number of criminal convictions, and pedophile assault index being retained for optimal prediction. The procedure correctly classified 70.6% of the original group, 82.8% of the non-recidivists, and 52.6% of the recidivists. PCL-R Total Score alone was equally successful in a similar discriminant function.*

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**Title:** **Will They Do It Again? Predicting Sex-Offense Recidivism**  
**Publication:** Current Directions in Psychological Science  
**Issue:** Vol. 9, No. 3  
**Pages:** 106  
**Year:** 2000  
**Author(s):** Hanson RK

**Abstract:** *This article reviews the empirical research on the prediction of reoffending among sexual offenders. The major predictors of sexual-offense recidivism are factors related to sexual deviance (e.g., deviant sexual preferences, previous sex crimes) and, to a lesser extent, criminal lifestyle (e.g., antisocial personality disorder, total number of prior offenses). The factors that predict general recidivism among sex offenders are the same as the factors that predict general recidivism among nonsexual criminals (e.g., juvenile delinquency, prior violent offenses). Given that there are special predictors of sexual recidivism, evaluators should consider separately the risk for sexual and nonsexual recidivism.*

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**Title:** **Where Should We Intervene? Dynamic Predictors of Sexual Offense Recidivism**

Publication: Criminal Justice and Behavior  
Issue: Vol. 27, No. 1  
Pages: 6-35  
Year: 2000  
Author(s): Hanson RK, Harris AJR

Abstract: *Effective intervention with sexual offenders requires the targeting of appropriate risk factors. In this study, information on dynamic (changeable) risk factors was collected through interviews with community supervision officers and file reviews of 208 sexual offense recidivists and 201 non-recidivists. The recidivists were generally considered to have poor social supports, attitudes tolerant of sexual assault, antisocial lifestyles, poor self-management strategies, and difficulties cooperating with supervision. The overall mood of the recidivists and non-recidivists was similar, but the recidivists showed increased anger and subjective distress just before re-offending. The dynamic risk factors reported by the officers continued to be strongly associated with recidivism, even after controlling for preexisting differences in static risk factors. The factors identified in the interview data were reflected (to a lesser extent) in the officers' contemporaneous case notes, which suggests that the interview findings cannot be completely attributed to retrospective recall bias.*

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Title: **An Analysis of Risk Factors Contributing to the Recidivism of Sex Offenders on Probation**  
Publisher: Arizona State University  
Year: 2004  
Author(s): Hepburn JR, Griffin ML

Abstract: *Over the last decade, the use of community supervision for sex offenders has generated an intensity of public debate rarely experienced with regard to issues of community corrections. Nationally visible cases involving sex offenders who re-offended once released into the community have prompted legislators, the media and local communities to focus on the risk sex offenders pose to public safety and the most appropriate means of dealing with this unique offender population. Recent legislation has, for instance, mandated community notification in an effort to enhance community safety, created the possibility of lifetime probation for sex offenders as a means to extend formal supervision and control indefinitely and, for those deemed to be "sexual predators," authorized their continued incarceration for an indefinite period for the purpose of "treatment" once their sentence to the Department of Corrections has expired.*

*These initiatives are based on assumptions regarding the risks posed by this offender population, including the wide-spread belief that strangers pose a greater risk than family members, friends and acquaintances that all sex offenders pose similar levels of risk and exhibit similar risk factors and that prevailing methods of community supervision and treatment of sex offenders are inadequate. As noted by Prentky, Lee, Knight and Cerce (1997:655) these and other assumptions, and "indeed, all facets of the social and political response to sexual violence...rely upon an informed, empirically sound understanding of the re-offense risks posed by different groups of sex offenders." There is an increasingly large amount of research on sex offender treatment and recidivism which examines these assumptions and which provides the type of data necessary to make informed policy decisions. This study of 419 adult male sex offenders on probation contributes new information to the discussion of risk factors and successful probation outcomes.*

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Title: **Recidivism of Sex Offenders Released in 1994**  
Publisher: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs – Bureau of Justice Statistics  
Year: 2003  
Author(s): Langan PA, Schmitt EL, Durose MR



**Abstract:** *In 1994, prisons in 15 States released 9,691 male sex offenders. The 9,691 men are two-thirds of all the male sex offenders released from State prisons in the United States in 1994. This report summarizes findings from a survey that tracked the 9,691 for 3 full years after their release. The report documents their "recidivism," as measured by rates of re-arrest, reconviction, and re-imprisonment during the 3-year follow-up period. This report gives recidivism rates for the 9,691 combined total. It also separates the 9,691 into four overlapping categories and gives recidivism rates for each category: rapists, sexual assaulters, child molesters, released statutory rapists. The 9,691 sex offenders were released from State prisons in these 15 States: Arizona, Maryland, North Carolina, California, Michigan, Ohio, Delaware, Minnesota, Oregon, Florida, New Jersey, Texas, Illinois, New York, and Virginia.*

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**Title:** **The Relationship between Treatment Goals and Recidivism among Child Molesters**  
**Publication:** Behavioral Research Therapy  
**Issue:** Vol. 32, No. 5  
**Pages:** 577-88  
**Year:** 1994  
**Author(s):** Marques J, Nelson C, West MA, Day DM

**Abstract:** *Preliminary findings from a longitudinal outcome study of sex offender treatment are presented. Ss included 76 child molesters who were treated in a comprehensive relapse prevention program, and 79 molesters who were randomly assigned to a control (no treatment) condition. Three sets of findings are reported: survival analyses of time to re-offense; in-treatment change data relevant to the program's treatment goals; and the relationships between treatment measures and risk of re-offense. Over an average follow-up period of 38 months, there was a trend for treatment Ss to be at lower risk for both sex and violent crimes than were controls. Treatment Ss showed significant progress towards treatment goals of increased acceptance of personal responsibility for their crimes and decreased levels of deviant sexual arousal. Measures of personal responsibility, however, were not related to risk of re-arrest for new sex crimes. Treatment Ss with high levels of both deviant and non-deviant sexual arousal were more likely to commit new sex offenses, but not other violent offenses. The strongest predictor in the study was a measure of the Ss' skills in applying the relapse prevention model, with highly skilled Ss being less likely to commit new sex crimes.*

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**Title:** **Recidivism Rates Among Child Molesters and Rapists: A Methodological Analysis**  
**Publication:** Law and Human Behavior  
**Issue:** Vol. 21, No. 6  
**Pages:** 635 - 659  
**Year:** 1997  
**Author(s):** Prentky RA, Lee AFS, Knight RA, Cerce D

**Abstract:** *This study addressed the high variability in sex offender recidivism rates by examining several of the critical methodological differences that underlie this variability. We used a dataset on 251 sex offenders (136 rapists and 115 child molesters) who were discharged over a 25-year period to examine changes in recidivism as a function of changes in dispositional definition of re-offense (e.g., arrest or conviction), changes in the domain of criminal offenses that are considered, and changes in the length of exposure time. The data indicate that: (a) both rapists and child molesters remain at risk to re-offend long after their discharge, in some cases 15–20 years after discharge; (b) there was a marked underestimation of recidivism when calculating a simple proportion (%) consisting of those who were known to have re-offended during the follow-up period, and (c) there was a marked underestimation of recidivism when the criterion was based*

on conviction or imprisonment. Forensic, clinical and policy implications of this high variability are discussed.

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Title: **Risk Factors Associated with Recidivism among Extra-Familial Child Molesters**

Publication: Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology

Issue: Vol. 65, No. 1

Pages: 141 – 149

Year: 1997

Author(s): Prentky RA, Knight RA, Lee AF

Abstract: *This study examined the predictive efficacy of 10 rationally derived, archivally coded variables for assessing re-offense risk among extra-familial child molesters. Follow-up data on 111 child molesters who were discharged from the Massachusetts Treatment Center between 1960 and 1984 were used. Degree of sexual preoccupation with children, paraphilias, and number of prior sexual offenses predicted sexual recidivism. Juvenile and adult antisocial behavior, paraphilias, and low amount of contact with children predicted nonsexual victim-involved and violent recidivism. Area under the receiver-operating characteristic curves in all three analyses indicated discrimination that was substantially better than chance, ranging from .73 to .79.*

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Title: **Actuarial Prediction of Sexual Recidivism**

Publication: Journal of Interpersonal Violence

Issue: Vol. 10, No. 1

Pages: 85 – 105

Year: 1995

Author(s): Quinsey VL, Rice ME, Harris GT

Abstract: *An actuarial approach to predicting sexual recidivism among known sex offenders is illustrated with a reanalysis of follow-up data of rapists and child molesters. One hundred seventy-eight sex offenders who had been assessed at a maximum security psychiatric facility were followed for an average of 59 months of opportunity to re-offend. Twenty-eight percent were convicted of a new sex offense and 40% were arrested, convicted, or returned to the psychiatric facility for a violent (including sex) offense. Rapists were more likely to recidivate than child molesters. Psychopathy, measures of previous criminal history, and phallometric indexes of deviant sexual interests were found to be useful predictors of sexual recidivism. A predictor scale was formed by weighting each predictor that was significant in the regression analyses by a number reflecting its univariate correlation with the criterion. A linear relationship ( $r = .45$ ) was found between scores on the predictor scale and reconviction for a sexual offense.*

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Title: **Prediction of Recidivism in Exhibitionists: Psychological, Phallometric, and Offense Factors**

Publication: Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment

Issue: Vol. 14, No. 4

Pages: 329 – 347

Year: 2002

Author(s): Rabinowitz Greenberg SR, Firestone P, Bradford JM, Greenberg DM

Abstract: *Exhibitionists have traditionally been regarded as nuisance offenders. However, empirical studies show that some offenders can be highly recidivistic and can escalate to incidents of hands-on sexual assault. The objective of this study was to investigate predictors of recidivism in*

exhibitionists and clarify the differences between hands-on and hands-off sexual recidivists. Two hundred and twenty-one exhibitionists were assessed at a university teaching hospital between 1983 and 1996. Archival data came from medical files and police files. The Psychopathy Checklist – Revised (PCL-R) was assessed retrospectively. Results indicated that over a mean follow-up period of 6.84 years, 11.7, 16.8, and 32.7% of exhibitionists were charged with or convicted of sexual, violent, or criminal offenses, respectively. Sexual re-offending recidivists were less educated, and had more prior sexual and criminal offenses. Violent, recidivists were also less educated, had lower Derogatis Sexual Functioning Inventory (DSFI) scores, higher PCL-R Totals, and more prior sexual, violent, and criminal offenses. Criminal recidivists were younger, less educated, had lower DSFI scores, higher PCL-R scores, higher Pedophile Indices, and more prior sexual, violent, and criminal offenses. Hands-on sexual recidivists demonstrated higher PCL-R ratings, higher Pedophile and Rape indices, and more prior sexual, violent, and criminal offenses than did hands-off counterparts.

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Title: **Sexual Recidivism among Child Molesters Released from a Maximum Security Psychiatric Institution**  
Publication: Clinical Psychology  
Issue: Vol. 59, No. 3  
Pages: 381 – 386  
Year: 1991  
Author(s): Rice ME, Quinsey VL, Harris GT

Abstract: *The recidivism of 136 extra-familial child molesters who had received phallometric assessment in a maximum security psychiatric institution from 1972 to 1983 was determined over an average 6.3-year follow-up. Fifty had participated in behavioral treatment to alter inappropriate sexual age preferences. Thirty-one percent of the subjects were convicted of a new sex offense, 43% committed a violent or sexual offense, and 58% were arrested for some offense or returned to the institution. Subjects convicted of a new sex offense had previously committed more sex offenses, had been admitted to correctional institutions more frequently, were more likely to have been diagnosed as personality disordered, were more likely to have never married, and had shown more inappropriate sexual preferences in initial phallometric assessment than those who had not. Behavioral treatment did not affect recidivism.*

## OTHER OFFENDERS

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Title: **Comparative and Joint Prediction of DUI Recidivism from Alcohol Ignition Interlock and Driver Records**  
Publication: Journal of Studies on Alcohol  
Issue: Vol. 64, No. 1  
Pages: 83-92  
Year: 2003  
Author(s): Marques PR, Tippetts AS, Voas RB

Abstract: *This work was conducted to find practical predictors that anticipate which driving under the influence (DUI) offenders will continue to drink and drive after a period of alcohol ignition interlock-controlled driving ends. The interlock prevents impaired driving by requiring a low blood alcohol concentration (BAC) breath sample before allowing an engine to start. Each breath test is recorded. The study evaluated the interlock record as a predictor of future DUI offenses relative to driver records and self-report items.*

Subjects were 2,273 DUI offenders in Alberta, Canada, who used an interlock to gain full reinstatement of driving privileges; for 2,134, the installed periods ranged from 5 to 30 months. A median of 8.1 breath tests was logged for each installed day; 9.9 tests were taken on each day of vehicle use (4.3 starts plus 5.6 running retests). Predictors of post-interlock repeat DUI were compared by sensitivity and survival analyses. **RESULTS:** Although 69% of all interlock users had at least one BAC test  $\geq .04\%$  (a "fail" test) within the first 5 months, only 9% were reconvicted up to 4 years after interlock removal. Failed interlock tests proportional to all BAC tests taken was the best predictor of driver recidivism risk during the years following interlock removal. **CONCLUSION:** The interlock record provides new information, particularly about drivers with no prior DUI offenses. Prior moving violations and driving while suspended convictions, although better predictors than questionnaire data, were poorer than interlock records and prior DUI offenses. The alcohol interlock, already recognized as a useful control device, warrants attention for DUI prediction as well.

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Title: **Recidivism in Stalking and Obsessional Harassment**  
Publication: Law and Human Behavior  
Issue: Vol. 27, No. 3  
Pages: 251 – 265  
Year: 2003  
Author(s): Rosenfeld B

Abstract: *Despite the rapidly growth of mental health attention focused on the phenomenon of stalking, no empirical research to date has attempted to assess the frequency of repeat offending or attempted to identify predictors of recidivism. A total of 148 stalking and harassment offenders who were court-ordered to undergo a mental health evaluation were followed for a period of 2.5–13 years in order to assess the frequency of repeat offenses and the variables that differentiated high versus low risk offenders. Recidivism data were obtained from a variety of sources, including criminal justice records, mental health records, and reports from probation officers and victims. A number of potential "predictor" variables were selected on the basis of the existing recidivism literature in other criminal justice populations. Frequency analysis were used to identify variables that significantly differentiated offenders who did and did not re-offend while survival analysis was used to analyze the impact of these covariates on time to re-offense. A total of 49% of the offenders re-offended during the follow-up period, 80% of whom re-offended during the first year. The strongest predictors of recidivism included the presence of a personality disorder, and in particular, a "Cluster B" personality disorder (i.e., antisocial, borderline, and/or narcissistic). In addition, those offenders with both a personality disorder and a history of substance abuse were significantly more likely to re-offend compared to either of these risk factors alone. Surprisingly, the presence of a delusional disorder (e.g., erotomania) was associated with a lower risk of re-offender. The findings are discussed in terms of the legal system and treatment implications.*

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Title: **Predicting Batterer Recidivism Five Years after Community Intervention**  
Publication: Journal of Family Violence  
Issue: Vol. 7, No. 3  
Pages: 167 – 178  
Year: 1992  
Author(s): Shepard M

Abstract: *The purpose of this study was to examine batterer recidivism rates 5 years after community intervention and to determine differences that discriminate between recidivists and non-recidivists. Of the 100 men included in the sample, 40% were identified as recidivists because they were either convicted of domestic assault, the subject of an order for protection, or a police*

*suspect for domestic assault. A discriminant analysis was conducted using a variety of background and intervention variables. Five variables were selected that significantly discriminated between recidivists and non-recidivists and correctly classified 60.6% of the cases. Men who had been abusive for a shorter duration prior to the program, court ordered to have a chemical dependency evaluation, in chemical dependency treatment, abused as children, and previously convicted for non-assault crimes were more likely to be recidivists. Variables relating to intervention did not significantly predict recidivism. Implications for community intervention programs are discussed.*